Musket

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Senate Overrides Veto

By Will Eisner

The Lexington High School Student/Faculty Senate overrode Principal David A. Wilson's veto of a substitute bill by an overwhelming vote during their meeting on January 25. This bill, if upheld by the School Committee, would give teachers of Junior and Senior classes the right to cancel class as opposed to having a substitute. Under prescription of the bill students who have open campus would be allowed to leave the school while students who do not would be expected to go to study halls.

A copy of the bill will be forwarded to the School Committee along with statements from the Senate and Wilson supporting their positions. The School Committee will have ten days to decide whether or not to they will reinstate the bill.

The bill was the result of rising discontent by students over the poor quality of many substitute teachers, some of whom are put into curriculum areas where they have little or no knowledge of the subject.

In other news, the Senate recently passed a Student Schedule bill that will directly affect current and incoming high school classes. The bill states that graduation requirements may not be added once a student has chosen his or her program for freshmen year. For classes already here, it will prevent any further classes from being added midstream. Mr. Wilson signed this bill and it is now school policy.

The bill was written in response to the recently created Life Skills program. Junior Senator Anjan Mukherjee explained the reasoning behind the bill was to "prevent future programs from being imposed on classes once they have already entered the school".

Mukherjee said "the bill was a reaction to the way in which the Life Skills program was imposed on the Juniors". The bill does not change the addition of Life Skills but prevents anything like it from happening again.

The bill underwent many changes and had many amendments added to it before it was passed unanimously. One amendment, proposed by Freshman Senator Luca Struble, changed the wording of the bill so that it stated "requirements may not be added", but could be taken away. This amendment passed.

Another amendment, proposed by Faculty Senator Les Phillips, changed the bill so it would not

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Math teacher Russel Goodwin filed a grievance regarding a letter of reprimand placed in his personnel file.

Photo by Lara Ho

Severe Budget Cuts Projected

by Dena Weinstein and Jeremy Giller

"The following year is going to be terrible [and] I am not looking for great economic times over the next several years," Superintendent of Schools Philip E. Geiger said of the outlook for the economic future of the Lexington schools at a recent systemwide faculty meeting.

At the January 4 meeting, Geiger discussed the Lexington Public Schools budget proposal for the 1990-1991 school year. The proposal, which calls for a 5.81 percent increase over this school year's budget, includes a 13.08 staff reduction of high school faculty and a total decrease of 22.43 faculty overall. The school committee's vote on the budget is scheduled for either February 6 or 13.

Geiger explained his rationale behind faculty cuts by stating, "We were not trying to save jobs, we were aiming to save programs." No program cuts were proposed, according to Geiger.

Although former controversial plans had suggested raising number of classes per English teacher from four to five, it was decided at a January 23 District Administrative Team (DAT) meeting that the number of classes would remain at four, with lower level classes being raised to an average of about 20 students from the current 18. The DAT includes central administration, school principals, and program coordinators. The entire budget remains unfinalized until the School Committee's approval.

The average number of students per English teacher will be raised from to the current 88 to 94, according to English Department Head Deborah Perry. In addition, three-quarters of an English teacher, originally proposed to be cut, will be saved in the new plan. Perry said, however, that over one teacher will still be cut in the English department. Perry said, of the English situation, "Given everything else, we're in really fine shape."

Science teaching hours may be raised, although the decision as to exactly how these hours will be added has not yet been finalized. Science Coordinator Nick Tzimoupoulos has suggested lowering blocks per week in Level II classes to five and in Level III classes to four to allow teachers to teach more sections.

> "If they go to 2%, they might as well close down the schools...it cannot be done."
>
> -David Spang
> Science Teacher

Also at the January 23 DAT meeting, user fees were considered as a way to raise the extra money needed in the budget. The user fee of about $100 dollars would apply to the entire high school population as a student activities fee. High School Principal David A. Wilson stressed that this was only a "consideration" and that, in the entire budget, "nothing is finalized."

School Committee member John Obertuffer said, "I would not like to consider the budget with user fees...I am philosophically opposed to user fees."

Teacher cuts will be based strict-

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Teachers Claim Rights Violated

Charge Free Speech At Issue

by Jeremy Giller and Dena Weinstein

Concern over freedom of speech is the latest issue that has widened the rift between the high school faculty and Superintendent of Schools Philip E. Geiger. Since the beginning of the school year, the Lexington Education Association (LEA) has filed four grievances that allege individuals have had their first-amendment rights violated.

In addition, at a series of Professional Development meetings on January 11, the high school faculty expressed a consensus that there is a fear among staff to speak out against central administrative policies. After meeting in small groups earlier in the afternoon, the faculty reconvened as a whole, and one leader said that his group concluded that the administration may be negligent in protecting "first-amendment rights."

Geiger said that the faculty has no fear to speak out. He stated that by maintaining that there is fear, the faculty is using a "ploy" and "is consciously making that statement to discredit" the administration. The superintendent said that the situation would be similar to his creating a false image he wanted "to project" to the faculty. He called their act "blatantly wrong."

Robert Miner, chairperson of the Professional Rights and Responsibilities (PR&R) Committee, a sub-committee of the LEA,stated, "There is an absolute fear [to speak out] on the part of significant numbers of staff members."

Geiger stated, "I have seen no evidence that people have an unwillingness to express their point of view."

At the time this story was going to press, a member of the LHS faculty, previously interviewed by the Musket, requested comments formerly attributed to the staff member not be included in any article, stating, "I feel our only hope is to avoid isolating individuals."

In addition, another high school staff member, when approached by a Musket reporter, expressed a fear of receiving retribution for comments made to the newspaper.

Assistant Superintendent Michael G. Waring said he has "observed people who have expressed strong feelings about certain things to me in private, but have indicated an unwillingness to do that in public. [Some people] have indicated that they feel frustrated because all they can do is [speak] in private."

Geiger said, "I can't imagine why they feel [afraid], when nothing has happened to people who have [spoken out]. There's no evidence that somehow it's going to be harmful to your health to speak [and] I have seen people be able to say things here as much as any place I have ever been."

Coordinator of Guidance Peter J. Burke Jr. and Diamond Middle School guidance counselor Richard Conant, formerly a counselor at LHS, have both protested letters of reprimand they received for comments attributed to them in the print media. Geiger wrote both of the letters, which were then placed in the individuals' personnel files.

> "There is an absolute fear [to speak out] on the part of significant numbers of staff members."
>
> -Robert Miner
> LEA PR&R
> Chairperson

English Department Head Deborah Perry commented, "Teachers don't know whom they can trust anymore." She called the alleged free speech violations "sad," especially in a school system where staff members are "trying to teach free thinking."

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Town May Cut $1m More

By Dena Weinstein

Just recently, a new development has taken place in the budget scenario that could potentially make an already poor situation potentially much worse. Town Manager Richard White has informed Superintendent of Schools Philip E. Geiger that he is requesting a capped increase of 2.67 percent on the 1990-1991 school budget due to both reduced state aid to the town and the constraints of proposition 2 1/2, which limits the overall increase in town property taxes to 2 1/2 percent.

Geiger said, "I would never recommend a 2.67 percent [school budget] increase...I think at this point, in 1990-91, we cannot make any additional cuts without adversely affecting the comprehensiveness of the educational program."

School Committee chairperson Polly Woodworth said, "It would

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Free Speech Censorship

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with the superintendent at the end of the 1988-1989 school year, when the high school faculty, in an overwhelming majority, voted "no confidence" in Geiger.

Miner felt that there is an administrative effort to stifle free speech. Geiger denied any such effort.

PR&R Chairperson Miner said, "More than three grievances have been filed over issues that we would allege and have alleged inhibit our right to speak in a forum." In representing the LEA members' interests, the PR&R Committee attempts to ensure that the integrity of the union contract is upheld.

A grievant will first try to reach resolution with his immediate supervisor — usually a department head or principal. Then, if not resolved, the case will go to the superintendent. If discussions there prove unsuccessful, the grievance goes to the Lexington School Committee and finally to the American Arbitration Association.

If the case involves a coordinator, it goes directly to the superintendent, according to Miner. The grievants have the ultimate decision as to whether to accept resolutions until the School Committee level, Miner said. After that, the LEA has the decision as to whether to continue with the grievance. In unusual situations, a case could be brought before the Massachusetts State Labor Relations Board or the Civil Liberties Union.

According to Geiger, personnel files contain an "assembled record of employment during the time that [employees] are here." In the writing of recommendations to potential future employers, the information in the files is often used as a basis to report from, Geiger said. He added, "You report generic performance to future employers and any obvious patterns that have developed over the course of time."

Geiger said that employees are not required to be notified when documents are placed in their files. However, a clause in the current LEA contract stipulates, "Any complaint...directed toward a teacher deemed serious enough to be included in the teacher's personnel file shall be promptly called to the teacher's attention." According to Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and Administration Richard H. Barnes, staff members can review their files at any time, giving about 48 hours notice prior to inspection.

"I have seen no evidence that people have an unwillingness to express their point of view."

-Superintendent Philip E. Geiger

Superintendent Phillip E. Geiger

***Musket* File Photo**

LHS math teacher and LEA high school representative Russell Goodwin has filed a grievance regarding a letter that he sent to LHS faculty members near the end of the 1989-1990 school year. When Goodwin examined his personnel file on October 11, 1989, he found a copy of his letter in it. Goodwin said the letter "didn't really relate to any of my job performance, so I didn't really think that [it] belonged in my file." Geiger said Goodwin's letter was appropriately placed in the file because it "seemed to have relevance to him since it was a matter of widespread public distribution."

The letter, titled "Dr. Geiger Does it Again," discussed comments that Geiger had made at a March 1989 School Committee meeting. It stated, "Dr. Geiger, the ranking educational official of the Lexington Public Schools, referred to teaching as a '60% job on the clock.' Once more, Dr. Geiger chose not to be an advocate of teachers or the teaching profession...Shame on him."

The letter went on to discuss the "responsibility" of all faculty members "to speak up when they or other members of the teaching profession come under unwarranted criticism or are misrepresented."

Goodwin originally attempted to track down who put the letter in his file. After repeated conversations with Barnes in his effort to discover the person's identity, Goodwin filed a grievance over the placement of the letter in his file.

Geiger denied the request to have the letter removed, based on a rule that states all grievances must be filed within ten days of the alleged incident. However, Goodwin took exception to the superintendent's decision, saying, "The delay was on [the administration's] part, not my part." On January 30, the grievance was resolved at the School Committee level.

Goodwin believes that placing the letter in his file represented a violation of his first-amendment rights, stating, "My own suspicions were that...it might be a way of intimidating somebody from speaking out." He said, "I've worked under four [previous] superintendents...and we've never had this problem [of free speech] before." He said that he believes that there is, "to some degree," an administrative effort to stifle free speech.

In another incident, high school physics teacher David Spang has settled a grievance regarding a disagreement between himself and Science Coordinator Nicholas Tzimoupoulos, voiced at a November faculty meeting. After the meeting, Spang received a letter of reprimand. That letter has since been withdrawn following discussions with LHS Principal David A. Wilson. Spang said that the grievance "was filed on the basis of the right of free speech." He added, "Neither party was left with bad feelings."

The Conant case concerns comments attributed to the former LHS employee in the October 1989 issue of the Musket. The article in ques-

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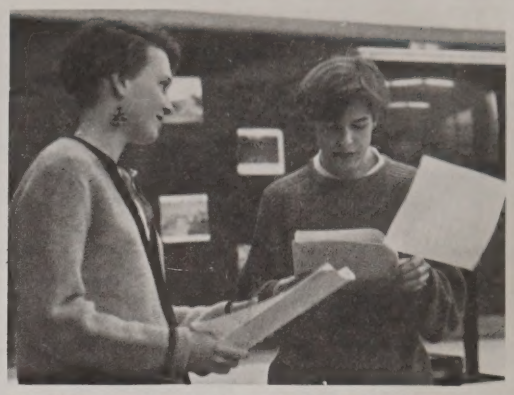

Sara Merrill and Paul Sundue rehearse for this year's Winterfest which featured student-directed plays.

Photo by Lara Ho

Substitute Bill Passed Over Wilson's Veto

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only effect incoming classes but classes already here as well. Phillips proposed to amend the bill by striking a sentence that read "Those classes already here will be grandfathered". This change prevented the bill from affecting the Life Skills program. This addition was proposed because many Senators feared that a bill that directly affected Life Skills would be vetoed by the Principal and rejected by the School Committee, which had already approved the program. This amendment passed as well.

In addition to the Student Schedule bill, the Senate also passed several other bills, accepted the application of the LABB petition to fill one of the 5 at-large seats in the Senate, and added a resolution to the Lexington High School Constitution concerning the use of x-block time.

The Senate passed a Book Collection bill. This bill states that teachers must allow students to keep all text books relevant to the final exam until the day of the exam. The bill also says failure to return the books on time will result in an incomplete until the books are returned.

The Senate recently voted unanimously to accept Julian Heney as a Senatorial representative of the LABB (Lexington, Arlington, Belmont, Bedfored) program.

Each year any club or group can petition for one of the 5 "at-large" seats made available by the constitution. If a group thinks they deserve a space because they are not being fairly represented through normal procedures, they can petition the elections committee of the Senate for an open seat. Earlier in the year the Newcomers Club successfully petitioned for a seat.

The Senate also passed a resolution for the Lexington High School Constitution. The resolution says that "any activity, extra-help, or make-up session, practice, rehearsal, or meeting which is regularly scheduled and/or offered only during x-block is considered in violation of the constitution."

The [substitute] bill was the result of rising discontent by students over the poor quality of many substitute teachers.

Implementation of Life Skills Course Protested

by Annika Hipple

On November 21, the Lexington School Committee voted unanimously to require the completion of a new Life Skills program for current juniors starting during the second semester of this school year. Beginning next year, the course will be mandatory for every freshman as well as for juniors.

The decision has sparked a great deal of negative reaction among affected students and heated debate within the school community. The majority of students not immediately affected by the decision seemed uninformed or indifferent, but members of the junior class expressed anger over the short notice about the Life Skills course, saying it disrupts scheduling plans for both this year and next. Several juniors stated that it would be difficult to analyze the quality of a course such as Life Skills prior to its implementation, but said that they were angered by its sudden introduction to the list of graduation requirements.

The Life Skills course will include discussion of material such as stress management, dealing with pressure, goal-setting, values, communication skills, prejudice, and other issues students face as teenagers. The curriculum was developed during two weeks of planning sessions conducted in August. Involved in these workshops were four current juniors, the three high school Life Skills teachers, guidance counselors, two recent Lexington High School graduates, parents, and clergy members. The Lexington school system has received a $40,000 grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as well as an $18,000 grant from the Governor's Alliance on Drugs and Alcohol to aid in funding the program. Additional money is being raised through a new corporation called the Lexington Education Foundation.

Because they were not informed of the new graduation requirement at the time when they were planning their 1989-90 schedules, the majority of the junior class has expressed anger at the implementation of the Life Skills Program. In order to prevent future actions of this sort, the Lexington High School Senate recently passed a bill prohibiting the addition of

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News Briefs

Diamond Principal Gene Sullivan Dies

On January 7, Diamond Middle School Principal Eugene F. Sullivan, 56, died in his home of brain cancer, leaving the Lexington school community much saddened.

Sullivan, who had been principal at Diamond since 1971, was diagnosed with a brain tumor last March. Since then, Joanne Hennessey, formerly the assistant principal at Diamond, has served as Acting Principal.

A memorial service was held on January 10 at Lexington's Sacred Heart Church, and schoolyard flags were flown at half-mast until Martin Luther King Day.

Although Sullivan's illness had forced him to take sick leave since last March, his death still came as a shock to present and former Diamond Middle School students and teachers. "There was always the hope that he would get well," one student said.

However, Sullivan's name and memory will live on at Diamond. On November 6, the newly constructed Diamond library was dedicated to and named in Sullivan's honor.

Woburn Five Opens Branch Bank at LHS

Students, teachers, and school-system employees can finally benefit from the long-awaited opening of the Lexington High School Bank. The branch of the Woburn Five Cents Savings Bank opened Tuesday, February 13, and student response was "exciting," according to senior Doug Sarno, a bank worker.

During the first week of opening, nearly 100 accounts were opened, and business education teacher John Barstow said, "We hope, as time progresses, the bank will become more successful."

The bank, which is located in room G27, is open during F and G Blocks. It offers savings accounts, checking accounts (available only to seniors and adult staff members), and money order transactions. Members of the Lexington School System can also access travelers' checks, money market accounts, certificates of deposit, club accounts, and other services.

One-year CD rates are always one and one-quarter points below the prime rate, money market rates approximate eight points, and savings account rates are presently five and one-quarter points.

Students who wish to participate in running the bank must enroll in the Banking II course. Barstow noted that the two primary purposes of the bank are to "serve the Lexington education community and to provide an educational opportunity...."

He urged people to "take advantage of the bank. It will become a popular venture in the school, because everybody is going to benefit from it."

Westinghouse

The results of the Westinghouse science competition, a prestigious, nationwide contest, have been received. Venktesh Ramnath, Wei-Haw Chuang, and Eleanor Menzin each were named semi-finalists. 1500 projects were entered in the contest of which 300 were chosen as semifinalists. Massachusetts had only one finalist and six semifinalists, three of whom were from Lexington.

Arzhang Kamarei and Heather McKenzie are co-chairs of the Visions group.

Photo by Lara Ho

Youth Group Holds Benefit Concert

by Abbie Weber

Sex, drugs and rock and roll. The infamous trio which indisputably go together right? Well, the members of Lexington/Winchester's Everyone's Youth Group do not agree.

The youth group is in the midst of organizing a seventh benefit concert. Previously they have rocked for hunger and the homeless, but now they are rocking for AIDS (Aquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) and if history repeats itself, the Interfaith AIDS Ministry should get a mighty boost to its bank account.

In March 1990 five bands (four of which are Lexington based) will hold an evening of drug-free rock and roll. Their goal is to raise awareness and funds to fight the effect of the AIDS virus. "It's a very dangerous disease," commented Greg Ansin, LHS junior and participant in the concert, "you have to try to make people more aware, you have to try to stop it."

"It's important for [people] to know that just going to a concert can help children with AIDS", explained junior Ruthie Krieger, who together with Linda Mark (also a junior at LHS), co-chairs the Lexington end of the benefit organization. Adult organizer, Ashley Rooney, feels it's also important for kids to prove "there can be a drug free concert."

Rooney began the concerts in 1987 after she was brought in by the First Congregational Church in Winchester to entertain the masses of kids who were getting into trouble in the town.

Reportedly, the kids were bored and in their efforts to avoid boredom they resorted to drugs and drinking. Rooney's efforts to divert the Kids attention from their "bad habits" and channel their energy in a more positive direction was intensified following an out-of-hand party resulting in "a girl almost being raped."

The youth group began a hunger service helping the locals in a small, but important way, but soon they wanted to do something on a larger scale. "The kids wanted to do something on a world issue - at that time it happened to be hunger. I was approached by a girl who felt we should do something more," Rooney explained, "and at that time the Live Aid thing was big, so I talked to the kids and they seemed all for it. Then I got permission from the church to hold it [the concert]."

The first concert was not the event the other concerts have since proven to be with only 175 in attendance, but as the years passed, the numbers grew. The last concert had an attendance rate of over 500 people made up of all age groups.

The money goes to a group known as the Interfaith AIDS Ministry. This group is made up of area churches and temples set up in geographical clusters. Each (church and or temple) would then take charge of one problem with which AIDS victims are forced to deal. For example, one might see to the grocery needs of the patients in that specific area while another might take care of the linens.

But the question is... do the bands really do it for the cause or do they do it for the publicity? "I think they're really worried about it [AIDS]," Rooney stated, "but if I had to play priorities, the concert would probably come first." Guitarist for LHS bane, Mirage, Marc McLeod echoes that comment, "It's fun and people can see our band [at the concert]. It's a place to play." Drummer Dana Robinson, a member of Slight of Hand, also feels the benefit is a great opportunity for his band to gain publicity, but he adds, "and it's for a good cause."

Everyone's Youth Group's efforts have effected people who are not directly related to the intended beneficiary. The church gave the youth group a grant to create a documentary, taped at the last concert, emphasizing the good that kids can do. Rooney takes the tape to towns who feel they have troubled kids as part of a presentation on what interesting, positive things kids are doing. The United Congregational Church Headquarters purchased the rights to the tape so that any church in the country can have access to it. "It's a little religious, but it's really cool," said Ashley. The documentary is also available for sale.

In last year's concert, WBCN's Tammy Heidi was the master of ceremonies; she intends to return this year. According to Rooney, she really cares about the cause. As does the Governor's Alliance, who also took part in the 1989 chapter of the Rock For AIDS saga. Rooney expects they too will be part of this year's production, but as of press time she hadn't heard more than an initial interest.

Community members are also getting involved in the cause. This year the sound will be handled by Strand Sound. The owner of that company believes so strongly in the effort being made that he threw the lighting in at no extra cost. This concert will be the first of the seven to have professional lighting.

The concert has proven to be what it set out to be: an event to which kids want to go, supports a good cause yet remains drug-free. "Most problems have been kept out," Rooney explained, "Of course you can't screen everyone who comes in." In seven years of existence, there has not been one incident severe enough to warrant the termination of the concerts.

Anjan Mukerjee, junior class Vice President and guitarist for Sleight of Hand, believes the benefit is the right step towards kids doing their part to further the fight against AIDS. "One of the most direct threats to our generation is AIDS and as a generation we have to do all that we can to combat [the disease] and I think Rock For AIDS is the perfect way to combat it."

LHS Activism On the Rise

By Abbie Weber and Angela Yin

LHS has been experiencing an increase of student and teacher awareness lately.. Though at one time community service was only associated with the National Honor Society and their credit requirements, within the last few years social awareness has drastically increased through the form of groups such as Vision.

"Even last year there were a number of new groups set up with the intention of serving the community ," Assistant Principal In Charge of Student Affairs, Larry Robinson remarked, "but this year even more groups are forming to do things either formally or informally."

The National Honor Society is a group designed to recognize those seniors who have not only achieved academically, but also those who have demonstrated outstanding contributions to the school community. In order to fulfill their obligation to the organization, members must complete thirty-six hours of community service. Traditionally, these hours are completed by tutoring, but this year the group has stopped that practice and now finds other means for filling their requirements. For example, they work at soup kitchens, senior citizen functions, and school related activities such as Oktoberfest. The reasoning behind the termination of the tutoring is that it was too much of a hassle for presidents Senior Heather McKenzie and Doug Sarno to assign and keep track of who was tutoring whom, when, and how successfully; in the opinion of McKenzie.

"Vision started this year when a group of students and teachers felt the need for a club at LHS where they could become involved in helping other people. A lot of support and interest was shown when the idea was presented to the entire school and it really took off from there." explained Junior Arzhang Kamarei, who shares the presidency of the Vision group with Heather McKenzie. McKenzie describes the group as, "a group of concerned socially aware people, striving to bring more activism to Lexington."

Founded by teachers Elaine Engleberg, Martha Zimmerman and Barbara Estley, Vision was created with the intention of bringing an umbrella group over all of the interested student groups in the high school. It is divided into several specific sub-committees such as SPARE, a group concerned with animal rights, Homeless/ hunger, and the Community Service Group. The groups have aided their causes by marching, fasting and holding drives to raise awareness and contributions.

Earth Day, another sub-division of Vision, does exactly what its name implies. Its purpose is mainly to raise awareness about environmental issues with such projects as helping protect rainforests in South America.

April 22 is the formal Earth Day, however, the Earth Day group is planning events for April 24 since the 22nd falls on Spring break. They are at an early stage in planning a benefit concert and a fair where the group will hand out awareness pamphlets, sell T-shirts and pins with environmental slogans as well as sell environmental foods.

With the money Earth Day is hoping to raise, the group wants to send money to protect rainforests in a separate project from SPARE, which has set out an amount to protect an acre of rainforest in Belize, South America. Earth Day also hopes to raise enough to help other national and local environmental groups that deal with similar issues.

Another subset of Vision is Oxfam which held their big event in November, the Thursday before Thanksgiving. The group encouraged schoolwide participation in fasting and giving donations. Kamarei stated, "The Oxfam fast in November was highly successfully due to the hard work that everyone put in. The money we helped raise will go to aid starving people around the world so they can eat and become self-sufficient." However, Junior Nancy Kim, a chairperson for Oxfam was disappointed about the student participation, "I'd like to see more people fast. A lot of people donated, but fasting helps people understand how hungry [other] people feel."

Most members of Vision have a good idea why they are involved. Junior Anne Quinn, a chairperson for Earth Day, explained her reasons, "The good thing about [Vision] is that you can choose the group you want to be in. You can choose your own issues." Kim added, "I'm glad that there are new groups for more social awareness. It's important to know that these kinds of groups exist. Last year, there was only the [National Honors Society]." Junior Annika Hipple, also a chair for Earth Day, chimed in, "It's good that [Vision] started. A lot of people have a vague idea of issues. They don't know what they can do about them. Vision gives you a chance to take a stand and contribute."

"I think there comes a time when you have to look around you and see what you can help do for other people and the world you live in. People have to realize that, like it or not, we are all on this planet together and that if we don't do something now we may regret it late. This was our goal when we started Vision, to get people involved in improving our world and our lives. It's just something we felt we had to do," Kamarei said. McKenzie echoed his comment by saying, "It's becoming a time when the sixties are beginning to show up in text books and people are reading about them and saying 'Wow! wasn't that great.'" She added that the sixties was a time when everyone cared about what was happening around them, not just to them.

The Lexington High School Senate recently passed a bill which mandates that class councils perform one act of community service per year. These events can come in several forms such as food drives or benefit concerts, car washes or, as this year's senior class council has done for the past two years, funding a child in a third-world country. The Senate stipulates only that an event happen, there is no rule as to the length of time the council spend on the event.

Yet another example the growing awareness in LHS is the recently approved policy which makes it necessary for every student from the present sophomore class on to complete twenty hours of service in order to graduate. Though there initially was some opposition to the policy, many students have finally settled into the idea. Nancy Gordon, whose office is located in E-house, is responsible for keeping track of those community service hours. Unfortunately for some, class council hours cannot be counted toward graduation hours. These are just some facets of the ever-growing awareness at LHS.

Sophomores Present Holiday Fair

by Courtney Duff

After weeks of preparation, Sunday, December 16, the Sophomore Class Council presented the town with their Holiday Fair. The idea of having a fair was formed in late October by Sophomore Ann Chang, a class council member and Lisa Berol, history teacher and sophomore class advisor. Aside from raising money for the class treasury, the council's other goal was to increase the amount of sophomore participation.

Sophomore Deborah Binder, who participated in the fair, said, "I think that it was evident by attending the fair how much effort the sophomores put into the fair to make it as much as it could be." Early in the organization, the council divided themselves into different committees to ensure that things pulled through. Among the committees, each consisting of four members, were: food, fun food, crafts, publicity decorations, prizes, games , and publicity to other sophomores.

On Sunday, the fair was from twelve to four. However, the members who participated arrived at nine to set up. Many sophomore non-council students were also at the fair, contributing much to the event.

In a gym filled with food, decorations, crafts, and games, the sophomores were prepared to accommodate up to one thousand people. Throughout the day, there was a large amount of people walking through the gym, making crafts and playing games. The children from the Lexington Community had an opportunity to have their picture taken with Santa Clause, played by English teacher Charlie Daileanes. The most popular events were cookie decorating with Andrew Kvaal, the cake walk with Justin Sweder, snowflake making with Andrea Bettachi, the sponge throw at Michael Gordon's and Chad Bartel's 'pin the nose on Rudolph', with Andrea Caldwell, Tansy Young, and Ethan Zohn, and face painting with Justine Zack and Gina Coplon. Assistant Principal for Student Affairs, Larry Robinson, commented that, "It was a great effort [by the sophomore class] to provide entertainment for the kids in the community." The Nutcracker was also in session during the fair, while many people purchased the refreshments that the fair offered. As a result, the fair raised more money than at first anticipated.

In total, the fair raised about two hundred dollars, but more importantly, Robinson congratulated the sophomores' demonstrated skills. Martha Daileanes, the Sophomore Class President, concluded about the fair, "I'd say the Holiday Fair was the most beneficial experience the class has had. We had everything needed for success: teamwork, cooperation, and most of all, spirit. One thing I was most pleased with was the help we received from the non-class council members, parents and faculty. I'm thankful that the time and effort spent on this event helped make it the success that it was." The Sophomore Class Council hopes future classes will continue this event.

Letters to the Editor

Students Suggest Own Budget Cuts

Dear Editor,

The limits of Proposition 2 1/2 have finally reached Lexington, and in these times of financial limits, it is clear that the school department must present a budget as carefully trimmed as possible. However, the "raison d'etre" of a school system is to educate children in such matters as mathematics, history, reading, writing, problem solving and creative thinking. The people directly responsible for this instruction are the teachers, and it is critical to retain the teachers, especially the many excellent ones in the system. With that in mind, I would like to propose some reductions in other areas.

Cut all unnecessary material improvements. Recently at the high school, the system bought new tables for all the cafeterias and nine hundred dollar waste baskets for the entire high school campus. Students all agree that both purchases were non-essential.

Reduce the professional development budget. This year, two hundred thousand dollars is budgeted for this program, which includes professional days and travel expenses to conferences. Professional days are largely worthless in the eyes of those they are designed to aid; some of the faculty has termed them amateur days and conferences. This would also mean increased classroom-time for students.

Cut student I.D. cards. They are a financial failure, costing the system money to make and money to use (the school department covers the admission to athletic events for students with their I.D. cards).

Consolidate support systems. There are many various such systems in not only the school, but the town community as well. Between the Peer Information Center, guidance counselors, Replace and various school psychologists, there must be room for improved efficiency.

Cut non-essential educational materials. Such materials include new videotapes, books, and science equipment that the system can do without. This year, each department at the high school was asked to compile a wish list for the coming wear. They got the impression that they were to ask for the sun, the moon, and the stars. They did, not realizing that by being granted items that are pleasant to have but not indispensable, they would be in effect cutting staff members.

While it may still be necessary to reduce the number of teachers, cuts such as those above should preserve the jobs of several teachers. Those that must be laid off should not be selected on the basis of seniority alone. Some of the best teachers have the least seniority. Younger teachers are needed to bring fresh perspectives, new insights and creative methods into the system.

Retaining teachers should be the first priority of the school system. Fewer teachers mean larger classes, less personalized attention, more students per class, and fewer teachers available to supervise extra-curricular activities. In short, the each teacher cut corresponds to a drop in the quality of education in the Lexington Public Schools.

Sincerely,
LHS Seniors:
Chris Agostino
Jonathan Berg
Mathew Crimmins
Jeff Kvaal
Jennifer Lindwall
Doug Sarno

Jenanyan Scholarship To Be Established

OPEN LETTER TO THE LEXINGTON COMMUNITY

As you have undoubtedly heard, Lexington High School Foreign Language teacher, Rafe Jenanyan, died of AIDS last May 21, 1989.

In the Musket published shortly after his death, the front page included a tribute to Jenanyan, who battled heroically for over a year with the fatal disease.

In June 1988 Rafe was delighted by the Musket coverage of his retirement and his 25 year teaching career. Mr. Kafrissen, Social Studies teacher and Musket advisor, personally delivered several copies to Jenanyan's home. Rafe then sent copies far and wide, to his friends here and abroad.

Many of you have probably been Rafe's students. perhaps you had the frenzied pleasure of working with him to produce and cook the annual French dinner, an early December event that took place for 24 years until his retirement.

Perhaps you travelled to France with the Lexington High French Exchange trip, which Rafe piloted 13 years ago and which has grown into a most satisfying link with the Lycee Descartes in Antony, France, suburb of Paris.

In the fall of this year the French Club planted a Bradford Pear tree outside Rafe's former classroom. His mother and brother attended the brief ceremony and helped to shovel the dirt to cover the tree.

But we want to do more. With your support we would like to establish a Foreign Language scholarship in Rafe's memory, a scholarship which will enable Lexington teenagers to pursue college work in the field Rafe loved so much.

An initial fund-raising effort, we are contracting alumni and community residents in the hope you will provide seed money for a future scholarship. to be awarded annually to a deserving senior.

Please contact Sally Nelson in D house if you have further questions. Please send tax-deductible checks to The Jenanyan Scholarship Fund, c/o Sally Nelson, D House, Foreign Language Department, Lexington High School, Lexington, Mass., 02173.

Thank you for your support in this matters. We honor a great teacher.

Sincerely,

Sally Nelson
Foreign Language Teacher

Replace Should Be Saved From Cuts

Replace is a teen and family prevention and counseling center in Lexington. Information and counseling on family problems, suicide, pregnancy, drug abuse, and other teen issues are available to L.H.S. students at Replace.

Replace also offers the Peer Program. For over three years L.H.S. students have been able to join the Peer Program at Replace. As a member of the Peer Program, an L.H.S. student can man the Connection Hotline, work on the t.v. show "Peer Program Presents," or staff the Peer Information Center in E House.

As a member of the Peer Program I've gained self confidence, listening skills, and new knowledge of teen issues such as sexual abuse and teen depression. Members of the Peer Program often refer to the program as a type of family, where they're never afraid to be themselves. Many members feel the program is the most rewarding activity that they participate in.

The Town Manager Richard White is recommending that Replace receive no town funding after July 1, 1990. If the selectmen and and town meeting approve this budget cut, Replace will be in serious danger and the Peer Program could cease to exist. We need to let the town know that we value the services that Replace offers the youth of Lexington. If you appreciate Replace's services, write to the town selectmen, or let town meeting members know your opinion. Let your voice be heard, before it's too late for Replace.

Patty Flaherty
Peer Program Member

Change Vacation Homework Policy

The Administrative reminder issued on December 15, 1989 that "homework and holidays don't mix" is inconsistent with the purpose of furthering education at Lexington High School. The homework policy for the school year 1989-90 explicitly states to "not assign homework during vacation periods and on legal and religious holidays." Although students do not enjoy homework on holidays, most students and teachers would opt for homework on holidays as opposed to homework on weekends.

Why is homework on weekends the only alternative? Our teachers have the foresight to see that homework on weekends become the only policy for the students to keep up with our competition for colleges. These other schools, for example, are well-known known schools, Phillips Exeter and Andover, Concord/Carlisle, and Acton/Boxborough. These competitive schools neither have such policies of no homework on holidays, nor have considered them. In order to keep up with the fast-paced curriculum that our competition offers, we need to compensate in some way.

There are several practical reasons to choose homework on holidays. Many teachers have a long-established policy of homework on week-long vacations, such as Christmas, February and April breaks, giving students a rest on the two-day weekends. This edict might alter career-long policies and cause some confusion among the students who remain ignorant of this new clause. The purpose of any school is education, not only about facts or mathematical formulas, but about the outside world also. The edict may be convenient for some, but on the whole it is too unrealistic and impractical for students.

The impracticable application of this administrative edict also affects students. After five days of stress, most kids like to use their weekends to relax. With the increased homework load on their shoulders from the shift to more homework on weekends, some may even need to give up activities scheduled for the weekends to alleviate the extra stress. On the other hand, long vacations leave much time for students to consider and work on long-term projects, ideally suited for long breaks. Even though approximately 20 percent or more of students go away on family trips during vacations, the few do not outweigh the benefits for the majority. Also, if this is an issue, teachers are often extremely understanding of the circumstances and give students extensions on such projects.

By requiring all work during school and all play during vacations instills an unrealistic habit in students. If homework was not required during vacations, significant amounts of time would be spent watching T.V., sleeping late and all of the usual "holiday brain drain." The contrast between no work during breaks and no play during school contributes to a decreased productivity when students come back after long vacations. That is the case with most students when coming back from summer vacation which is why most teachers start slowly at the beginning of the year.

Another problem with this administrative reminder is that there was no student or teacher input. Being a clause which affects students the most, and then teachers, these policies should be up to the teacher to decide. Homework, as many of our teachers establish, is not used as a kind of punishment. The large majority of teachers require reasonable amount of work done in daily work as well as long-term projects. For example, in English teacher Richard Shohet's four classes, more than seventy percent of the students would rather have homework on holidays and vacations than during the weekend. The reason is obvious. If long-term projects were not assigned during vacation, then there would be more work for each student to do during school days. Long-term projects while school is in session would be the last thing most students need.

By Angela Yin

System in Decline

Dear Editor:

Throughout my four years at Lexington High School, I have seen a substantial decline in the quality of the school system. In 1986 when I entered the school there were enough housemasters so that a student could deal with problems in a more personal and individual basis. Rules were not so stringent and kids had more control over their own lives. Now, four authoritarians rule the school. If a problem arises an administrator does not have time to thoroughly analyze the situation. Instead, you get a detention or a suspension, which is completely counter-educational and probably one of the worst things that can be done.

When a teacher or an administrator makes a mistake in attendance it is the student's obligation to get a note or an excuse. A mistake made by an administrator several times has resulted in the suspension of students, because it would be time-consuming and inconvenient for them to go out of their way to discover what really happened. Meanwhile, the student is at home watching 'Wheel of Fortune.' Not only do students hate the administration, but teachers are starting to display the same lack of respect as well. Any complaint against the system never is fully followed through. In one certain conflict I approached guidance counselors, administrators, and department heads and was told to wait until I was out of school and then I would not have to worry about it. In a country where we are taught to fight for what we believe in, the school system has shown that it is much easier to get pushed around. than having and expressing individual thoughts.

Sebastian Quezada
Class of 1990

Musket

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Implementation Of Life Skills Challenged

The administration's underhanded method of implementation used for the Life Skills Program has created hostility towards the program which eliminates many of the program's intended benefits. Aside from the course itself, these methods place the program in serious jeopardy during its crucial trial years.

Students and parents must know high school graduation requirements beforehand to create the most educationally sound program of studies for the individual student. For the administration to impose Life Skills half-way through the year disrupts these plans and therefore, the student's ability to seek the best education.

The administration, however, could have prevented these problems. If it had consulted the teachers, parents, and students of the Lexington community before making these arbitrary policy decisions, then the education of students would not have been sacrificed. Instead, the consolidated power of the administration pushed the program straight through the School Committee and into policy.

These actions of the administration subvert the democratic process which is essential to the operation of an educational system. Although the Senate recently passed legislation preventing unexpected graduation requirements, its actions could not affect the Life Skills Program. The administration must adhere to a more traditional democratic method of implementation, including members of the educational community in the process.

When making these decisions, the administration must assume a leadership role in defending the interests of students, teachers and parents. The administration must first recognize the interests of the educational community and then speak for them when policy is being considered..

The problems of the Life Skills implementation are, however, part of an increasingly obvious trend to disregard the educational community. The new Attendance Policy and present budget proposals follow the same pattern in ignoring the interests of affected parties. If this school system is to function smoothly and properly, this neglect must end.

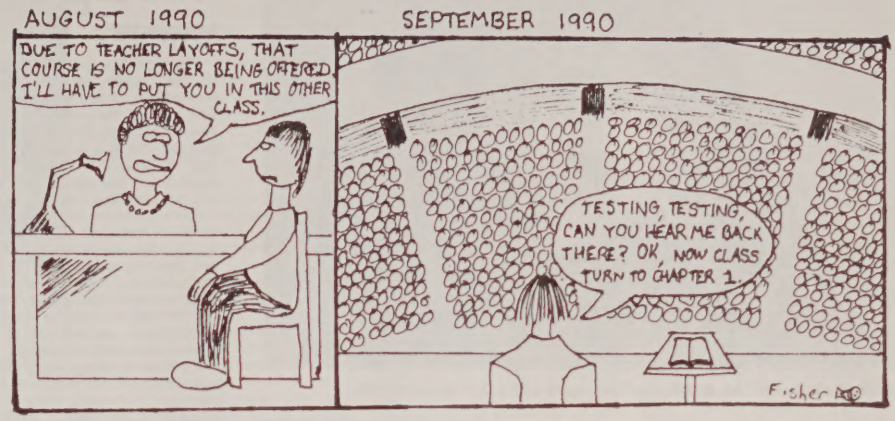
-Ethan Ehrenberg and Anjan Mukherjee

Pursuit Of Grades Misguided

We accuse our teachers of failing us, but maybe we should stop and consider the ways in which we are failing them and ourselves. If we were to become more involved possibly our teachers would find themselves more motivated. It is easier to teach students who are excited about learning, rather than those who are interested in maintaining their grade point averages. Every day seniors moan, "I can't wait until second semester." I find myself in classes in which it seems abundantly clear that the students are there to receive their "A" and not much else. These grades are valued as a means of getting into a "good" school. I hope, but doubt, that in college these students will become interested in education for its own value. If education comes to be only a means and not an end in itself, what has become of the educated, conscientious citizen who founded this nation? Lexington High School's student's obsession with grades may be a symptom of our age's seeming lack of values. The excesses and moral deficiencies of our government, culture, and business elite are due in a large part to an emphasis on the importance of the ends rather than the means. Our education system should be a place where the value of education and honesty as ends in themselves should be emphasized.

Not all students are Ivan Boeskys to be, nor are we entirely to blame. I notice that teachers often resort to college entrance as motivation for their students. Have we as a community accepted that high school is merely a place to differentiate between levels of mental ability and not truly for education? Solutions can come from many directions. Students can drive their teachers into directions or areas that actually interest them. Teachers could offer no grade courses, with some encouragement to try them. Maybe the administration should consider bringing back a revamped version of the "school without walls" concept. One thing is certain, the percentage of students at Lexington High School who do not feel fulfilled by the education they are participating in is far too high.

- Alex Campbell


AUGUST 1990
SEPTEMBER 1990
DUE TO TEACHER LAYOFFS, THAT COURSE IS NO LONGER BEING OFFERED. I'LL HAVE TO PUT YOU IN THIS OTHER CLASS.
TESTING, TESTING. CAN YOU HEAR ME BACK THERE? OK, NOW CLASS TURN TO CHAPTER 1.
Fisher

Well Rounded Education Questioned

The idea that everyone should get a "well-rounded" education is often taken as a given.. It has been defended by figures as varied as Professor Allan Bloom, the famous conservative education theorist, and LHS student Ethan Ehrenberg (see pg. 5 of the december, 1989 Musket. We do not look kindly on the student who takes lower level classes in some areas to pursue a special activity or interest.

But this view ignores the fundamental truth that all students are different and that schools must help each of them develop in their own individual ways. The needs and desires of one student are rarely the same as those of another. Many students might get far more benefit from pursuing a special interest than they would by spending more time studying subjects which do not interest them and which may have little relevance to their future careers. Besides developing their talents, students who commit themselves to special activities learn to work independently to a degree which is rarely possible in a normal classroom setting. They also gain a sense of achievement and self-worth which can be more valuable than the mastery of any specific subject.

It is often argued that schools should teach a basic body of of knowledge which everyone ought to know. Unfortunately, such a body of knowledge no longer exists beyond the very minimal level of basic skills like reading or writing. It may have existed in some preindustrial society where most people had similar careers and led nearly identical lives. But in a modern market economy where the diversity of careers is so great that most of us can't even name many of them, the idea of a universal body of knowledge which everyone must know is somewhat ludicrous. The knowledge needed by a nuclear physicist has little in common with the knowledge needed by, say, a philosophy professor.

All of this does not mean that schools can no longer serve a useful function. They still have the vital purpose of helping each student develop in his or her own way. For many, this might mean a well-rounded education. But we must realize that the traditional ideal of well-roundedness is not for everyone. By such a standard, Winston Churchill and Albert Einstein would be considered poorly educated. Yet these people contributed far more to society than their more well-rounded classmates. Many of the greatest advances in human knowledge and welfare were made by such one-sided eccentricities.

The greatest benefit that a school can give to its students is to help them develop as individuals. But if this is to happen, we must abandon the false belief that everyone must develop in the same, well-rounded way.

- Ilya Somin

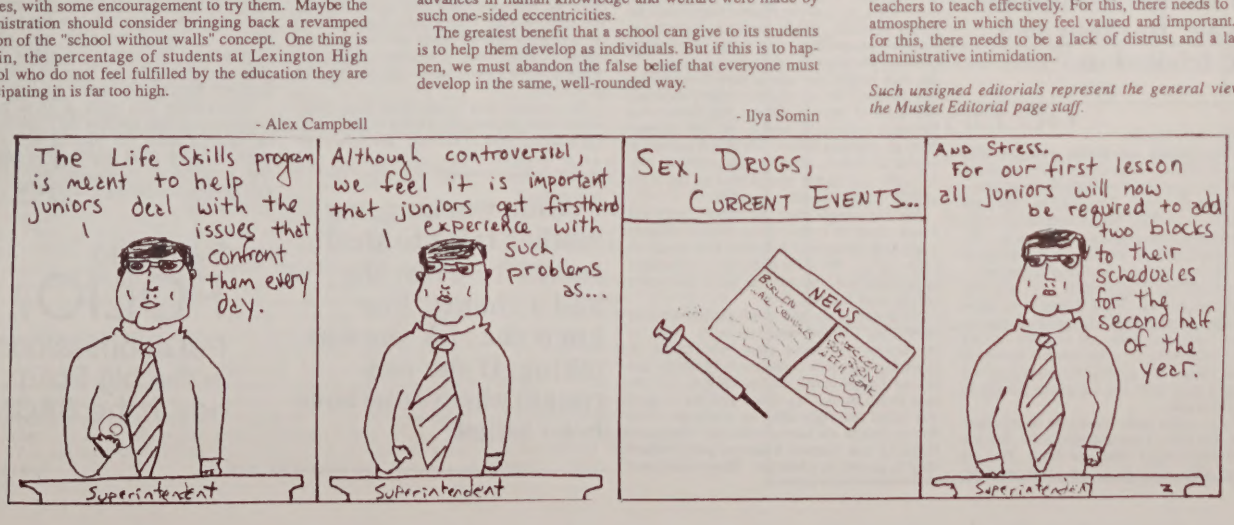
The deadline for letters for the next issue is March 2nd.

Distrustful Atmosphere Must Be Addressed

Recently, many Lexington teachers have alleged that Superintendent of Schools Philip E. Geiger has deliberately suppressed their freedom of expression through intimidation and reprimands. Clearly, this is a serious issue. Whether or not the accusations are true, the fear of speaking out that many teachers feel is symptomatic of the troubles of this school system and highlights the tensions that we must resolve. The fact that teachers in an educational system could even feel that they are being bullied and intimidated by the administration is absurd and almost tragic. Even if Geiger has not deliberately acted with the intention of intimidation, he has clearly exacerbated the distrust that many teachers feel of him by treating them as ultimately bypassable 'tools.' Geiger's intentions are unquestionably well-placed. He has, however, repeatedly and systematically demonstrated his inability to inspire confidence and trust.

What can be done? Geiger must immediately begin to demonstrate the value he places in teachers. Obviously, this rectification is a gradual process, but we must begin now before any more damage is done. In the final analysis, the quality of a school system is found in the ability of the teachers to teach effectively. For this, there needs to be an atmosphere in which they feel valued and important. And for this, there needs to be a lack of distrust and a lack of administrative intimidation.

Such unsigned editorials represent the general views of the Musket Editorial page staff.


The Life Skills program is meant to help juniors deal with the issues that confront them every day.
Superintendent
Although controversial, we feel it is important that juniors get firsthand experience with such problems as...
Superintendent
SEX, DRUGS, CURRENT EVENTS..
NEWS
And Stress. For our first lesson all juniors will now be required to add two blocks to their schedules for the second half of the year.
Superintendent

LHS student Terri Ly spent the first years of her life in Cambodia.

Photo by Tissa Abedinejad

Student Flees Khmer Rouge Nightmare

by Angela Yin

Everyone has gone through a childhood trauma. Junior Terri Ly and her brothers, Senior Bona Ly and Sophomore John Ly are no exception, but perhaps they have experienced more than some of us can or will in a lifetime. Being a refugee from their homeland of Cambodia, Terri, with her friendly smile hiding her past, is currently a student at Lexington High School.

Her experiences focus around being driven out of her home in Phnom Penh, surviving the labor camps under the Khmer Rouge, and adjusting to American life after her family immigrated to the United States in 1981. Terri's parents rebuilt their lives from owning four dollars stepping off a plane to the United States and then settling in Lexington approximately eight years ago.

Ly looks at things more differently than most of her friends because of what she went through. She stated, when asked about her thoughts on her dramatic childhood, "I can't believe I survived." One of Terri's friends, who knows her story, thought that she held an advantage in life. Most kids, Ly explained, are sheltered from horrible things and facts. Her past may give her a more encompassing world-view, but she still wishes it had not happened.

Being a student at LHS has changed Terri's mind somewhat about sticking with the "traditional Cambodian female" role. She, like so many other kids from drastically different ethnic backgrounds, wants to be more "American, because you have to be more American." However, she doesn't want to forget who she is, and her culture conflicts with American society.

Ly often imagines how life would be if her childhood was a peaceful one. "After everything I went through, living in America is not easy. Sometimes I wish I could go back." She finds that because she believes so strongly in her culture, it is "very hard to adapt."

The Cambodian tradition calls for arranged marriages for which Ly's parents have prepared her. She is not disappointed in their decision since most arranged marriages are not the torture that most people make it out to be. To her, arranged marriages teaches two people "to love an respect one person." Her own plans for her future children would be contrary to her tradition because it would be hard on both the parents and the children. Although she is planning to marry in an arrangement, she "feels so isolated" because she cannot date anyone else. "It seems like living in another world," Ly said, "In America, it's hard."

Not only is the clash of the cultures hard to deal, but also the difficulty in adapting to the Asian role model. She finds herself "more ambitious than most peers," but, she cannot seem to fit into the "smart Asian" stereotype. She says, regretfully, "All Asian people at Lexington High School are so smart and I know that I could never ever be able to compete with them, and I'm Asian too."

Ly already has her plans for the future, which are not exactly what her parents want her to do. She plans to attend college, even though in the Cambodian culture women do not need a higher education. Terri's mother had not even a high school education because she belonged to an upper-class family. Ly has already decided to graduate a year early, go to college and major in business or accounting. Then, Ly added, she would be happy to concede to her parents' marriage plans.

Although Ly is certain that she will be in an arranged marriage, she cannot be sure how she will feel after college is over. Terri is the middle child out of a family of five which often places a lot more stress on her. A few years ago, she may have been able to choose her future spouse was it not for her older sister. "[My sister] used to be the traditional type, until she started out with someone and broke away." Terri, who is the only other girl in the family, decided that she would not want to let her parents down. "It's really important [for my parents]" then she added, "there's no pressure from anyone, but myself."

In Cambodia, education is not valued much among the Cambodian women because they do not work. Terri was also brought up believing that education was not important for her. Why does she want to further her education so much? Her answer comes from a practical point of view. She explained that in Cambodia, men were paid a lot and were able to support the entire family, usually including the poorer relatives. Realizing that American life requires both the husband and the wife to work in order to live comfortably, she wants to be able to contribute for her end.

There are other reasons too. Most Cambodians who survived and immigrated to the United States did not take much time to learn English as her parents did. Many of the Cambodians that Ly knows live on welfare and "work under the table" to earn more money. She notes that they are "obsessed with money." Terri, considering why, thinks that "maybe because they were poor [in Cambodia], they never knew what it's like to be rich, until they came to America." She has also noticed that her family is perhaps one of the few Cambodian families living in Lexington. The explanation is simple for her."We came from an upper class family, so we put more value on education," she says.

Terri has recently written a journal telling of the horrifying events that past in her childhood. She hopes to have it published in the New York Times or the Boston Globe. Those experiences have shaped her into the person she is today.

Excerpts From Terri Ly's Cambodian Journal

(Part one of two)

Junior Terri Ly recently wrote a journal for her English class about her childhood in Cambodia. Here is her story:

Even though I'm Asian, I don't know how other Asian students got to be so smart. Maybe it's in their genes to be intelligent or their parents or their childhood teachers forced them to study really hard. If that's the case, then I guess I'm not as smart as they are because I didn't grow up the way they did. I barely remember the first five peaceful years of my life living with my aunts and uncles, cousins, and my grandmother in a very big house in Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Kampuchea).

I was born in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, now known as Kampuchea since 1979. My father worked for the French Embassy in Cambodia.... My mother came from a good family, but her parents passed away when she was eighteen. My father's salary was so high that he was able to support his family, his brothers and sisters, and other relatives who needed money. We were in the upper middle class rank. Everybody in the city, Phnom Penh, knew us and respected us because people were respected by their social class rank.

Toward the middle of the 1970's, the Vietnam War started spreading to Laos and Cambodia. President Richard Nixon and Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger thought that the only way to help the North Vietnamese destroy the South Vietnamese (Viet Congs) weapons was to bomb our country because the South Vietnamese were hiding their military weapons in our country. As time went by, the number of bombs and rockets being dropped increased drastically depending on the area where the military weapons were hidden.

"...we believed and rooted for everything the Khmer Rouge had to say. But they lied and tricked us."

The bombings and chaos went on until April 17, (New Year's Day) 1975 when the Khmer Rouge, the Cambodian Communist Party came to power. They told us they were going to stop the bombings and make Cambodia a peaceful country again. We were scared and we wanted the bombings to stop. So we believed and rooted for everything the Khmer Rouge had to say. But they lied and tricked us. They forced us to leave our homes at gunpoint. My father carried me on his back, my younger brother on my mother's hip with my older brother and sister beside them. We grabbed everything we could possibly carry and began our journey to the countryside....

We got on the train, but it was so crowded. During the ride , I became very sick. My life almost ended right then and there. But my uncles, who were studying to be doctors, found a way to make some medication to cure me. When we got to the countryside, we were divided into groups. The Khmer Rouge emptied the cities and towns to build its version of a peasant-based Utopia. They kept asking us if any of us were doctors, professors, armies or anything of a high occupation. They told us that if we tell them who we are, then they would let us go back home. People began to find out that nobody was able to go back.

The Khmer Rouge killed all the Cambodians who concealed their identities. My father was smart, he threw away every kind of identification he had with him, even our pictures. That's why I have no idea how I look like when I was a baby.

...Families couldn't stay together in the same group. We were ordered to wake up early in the morning and go to work until the sun set, usually even longer. Each group was placed in a certain area of the countryside with different jobs from the other groups. There were no houses or anything, but little wood cabins. Some didn't even have a cabin. There were so many mosquitoes, big green flies, and a lot of red ants. Some who were in the group near the swamps were eaten alive by mosquitoes, others got sick from malaria.

There were no bathrooms or anything, so people went to the bathroom everywhere. Little children died of diarrhea and lack of nutrition foods and milk. We didn't have any clothes except for what we had on and a thin towel called the krama which was used as a towel or to wrap around the head while working in the rice fields. Some even used it to hang themselves. My father was placed in the group near the Mekong River and my mother worked in the rice fields. They were under the supervision of the group leaders while they work. The group leaders watched them like hawks with a B-52 gun and a whip in their hands.... Little children around my age, six, had to pick rice seeds.

When it was time to eat, our hands had to be totally cleaned or we'd be in big trouble. They would put a big bowl of rice soup in the middle of the tables and we would eat as fast as we could. I could never eat as fast as the other kids, so I always came back with an empty stomach. While working, my mother tried to steal some rice when she had a chance. She knew the risk she was taking. If she was caught, she would have been killed. She couldn't let her children starve to death like a lot of other children. My father was fortunate enough to have a job that he was good at, catching fishes. We didn't get to eat any of the fishes, only the group leaders did. At night, my father would dive in the river quietly hoping to catch some fish.

After he caught them, he cooked them and saved them in a safe place where nobody could find them until he could find a way to come see us. We were so happy and thankful to see him because then we knew that we'd still be alive the next day.

Each day more and more people died of starvation, disease, and execution. One of my uncles was taken away one day to be killed because he was an army. Somehow the Khmer Rouge found out his occupation. He was shot through the heart and his kidney was taken out right after he was shot. The Khmer Rouge ate human kidneys. It amused them to see human kidneys jump when they're placed on a hot pan. They considered eating human kidneys as a symbol for being a true Khmer Rouge guerrilla. They had many techniques on how to kill people. Some people were tortured by having their necks cut slowly by banana leaves, which are very sharp. Others had to dig their own graves, then they were forced to stand in it until their heads were chopped off.

Sometimes little babies were thrown in the graves and buried alive. I never witnessed any of these scenes, but my parents told us about it. After my uncle was killed, his only son became sick with yellow fever. There weren't any doctors to help him, so he died a couple of hours later. I will never forget that moment when I stood there watching my own cousin die.

We couldn't stay in the same area of the countryside for long, so we had to keep moving from one area to another. The conditions became worse. Our rations decreased and the Khmer Rouge kept taking little children from their families to be brainwashed to learn how to kill people, even their own families.

"While working, my mother tried to steal some rice when she had a chance. She knew the risk she was taking. If she was caught she would have been killed."

The suffering, praying and dying continued until January 7, 1979, when the North Vietnamese came in and kicked the Khmer Rouge and their leader, Pol Pot, out. They fought against each other for several days until the Khmer Rouge couldn't take it any more. We heard gun shots every night. If the North Vietnamese came in several days later, it would have been too late because the Khmer Rouge planned to kill all the Cambodians. We were in the middle of digging an enormous hole. They told us it was for a new dam, but we knew it was a grave.

Within those four years, a lot of people committed suicide because they couldn't go on working under the burning sun on and empty stomach from sunrise to sunset, and they wanted to die the painless way. But we kept praying and hoping that we'd be able to go back home.

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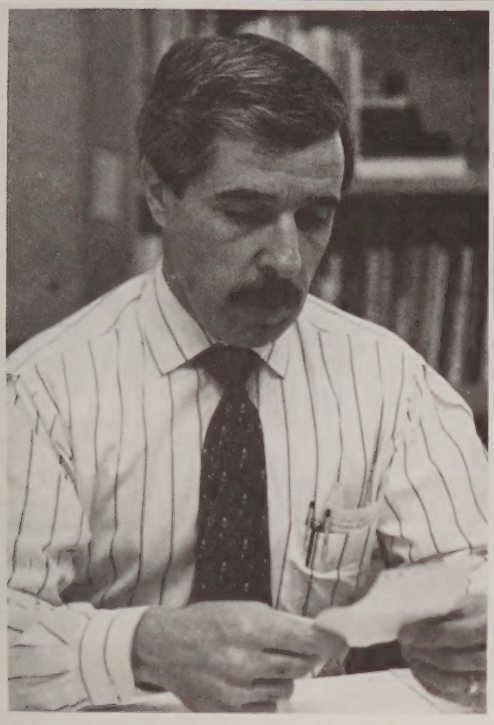

Former Foreign Language Department Head Anthony Bent now works for the Watertown School System

Photo by Lara Ho

Department Head Leaves System

By Matthew Cole

On January 12, Anthony Bent left his post as Lexington's Coordinator of Foreign Languages to the great regret of the Foreign Language staff. LHS German teacher Marion Comenetz characterized Bent as "competent, hard-working, and compassionate... a fine leader."

As he left to become the Director of Personnel and Professional Development of the Watertown Public Schools, Foreign language teacher Karen Girondel noted, "He has big shoes which are going to be hard to fill."

When he replaced Evelyn Brega in 1982, Bent began seven and one-half years as the coordinator of 32 teachers in grades 4-12. He also worked on the commission which integrated the ninth graders into the high school. Assistant Principal of Student Affairs, Larry Robinson, credited Bent with helping to keep "the process from lagging behind... He's a real process person; he doesn't just go through [his end of] a procedure, he follows it through to the finish."

Italian and French teacher Virginia Williams noted that one of Bent's outstanding features was his great "organization." Bent agreed, noting "organization is very helpful. If I don't have things organized, I get confused... [Organization] prevents fumbling."

To help eliminate "fumbling" and generally make the department more efficient, Bent decided to introduce computers into the teaching environment. However, he felt that he should not receive "direct credit" for the two Apple 2-E's and two Macintoshes which the Department uses, because he "just supported [the drive] with participation. I kind of jumped into the stream... When they were asking who needed computers, I just raised my hand... jumped on the bandwagon, grabbing computers [I] went."

One computer advantage Bent noted was that after a teacher writes out a ditto one year, "they stick it in a folder" for later. When they next remove it, the markings are compressed, and not as legible. "But saved on a disk... it's crystal clear. You can make changes and copies easily..."

The Acting Coordinator and Foreign language teacher, Mary Alice Samii, said Bent had "a vision, not just of Foreign Languages, but of education," and part of that vision was technology and change.

Upon arrival here in 1982, the first great change he implemented was the grouping of all the foreign language teachers into D and E-House, which "made a big, big difference" by allowing the teachers a chance to confer, and giving them a sense of identity as an individual department.

Bent also felt he had to raise the enrollment at the high school, especially the in the eleventh and twelfth grades. To increase interest, he oriented the junior and senior curriculum away from a "survey of French authors" to much more speaking and writing.

Since then enrollment has increased, although the school population has shrunk. Bent estimated that about 90% of the students in LHS were enrolled in a Foreign Language course, which, he says, "is as high [an enrollment] as anywhere."

Over his seven years here, he has earned the praise of many. Joanne Anderson, secretary to the Foreign Language Department, predicted "There will be a void in the Department." Comenetz said, "I will miss him dearly."

Bent reciprocated, calling the staff "special and different... committed, bright, stimulating; a real powerhouse [with] an extremely high energy level... I'll miss [LHS]."

Samii noted that, "He energized people... I think the energy will continue stay."

Giving credit to the teachers' own energy, Bent said, "Foreign language teachers [extend] themselves beyond the limits of a classroom," as he praised the work of teachers at activities like the awards ceremony, and exchanges with Spain and France.

David Daviau, chairperson of Foreign Language at Clarke Middle School and a language teacher at Clarke, said Bent was "supportive" of the extra-curricular events, like the Foreign Fling. "He is sincere... a pleasure to work with [and] a great guy."

Speech Infringement Alleged

Continued from page 2

tion, entitled "Conant, Swartz Reach Settlement With S.C.," related to a grievance that Conant filed over his being transferred to Diamond Middle School for what he believed to be inappropriate reasons. In the article, Conant is quoted as saying that he was transferred for "interpolitical reasons." He has since said that the above was an inaccurate quote, and that he actually said "internal politics," referring to his own guidance department. In addition, Conant was quoted as saying that he filed his original grievance on the basis of reverse discrimination, also an inaccuracy.

Conant, however, has reaffirmed the accuracy of all other comments in the article.

The guidance counselor received a letter from the superintendent in which Geiger, according to Conant, "implied that [my comments] could be interpreted as being irresponsible." In response to the letter of reprimand, Conant filed a grievance on the basis of there being no "just cause" that is required for an LEA member to be reprimanded by administration. The grievance was just recently resolved in discussions with the superintendent, according to Miner.

Last year, a similar case involving the "just cause" clause of the LEA contract went to the final step of the grievance process, to the American Arbitration Association, before being decided in favor of the grievant, LHS math teacher Aspasia Papanastassiou.

Conant said that he "certainly" believes that his first-amendment rights were violated, and that the "implication of the letter of reprimand hinders my free speech." Conant took offense to the tone of the letter, in which, according to Conant, it was implied that his comments were irresponsible. He commented, "I don't think I've ever said an irresponsible thing in my life."

The superintendent said that Conant "wasn't reprimanded, he was asked if there was a breach of his rights in terms of the transfer...and on what basis the [statements in the Musket] were made, since they were not factually correct." He added that he believes he was protecting Conant's rights through the letter by asking him who transferred him improperly. "Now, by protecting his rights, I'm being told I'm violating his rights," stated Geiger.

According to Geiger, after the article ran in October, Conant met with him to discuss the grievance situation. In the meeting, according to Geiger, Conant told him that the newspaper "totally misquoted him."

Conant stated, in the October article, "[The transfer] may be due to something I said." That comment, according to Geiger, referred to letters written in 1988 before the superintendent's arrival in Lexington. However, when questioned as to the meaning of his comments, Conant said they were a reference to "more contemporary times," after Geiger's appointment to the superintendency. Geiger maintains that Conant told him that the article was not an accurate representation of what the counselor had said.

Peter Burke, the coordinator of guidance, has resolved his grievance with the superintendent. Burke refused comment on the issue, other than to say, "The whole focus [of the problem] revolved around a difference of opinion between the superintendent and myself."

Assistant Superintendent Michael Waring told the Musket that Burke received a letter of reprimand "that appears to have been based upon comments" he made to the media. Geiger stated, "Mr. Burke is a supervisor and supervisors are not permitted, here or anyplace in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to discuss individual employee performance or decisions regarding employees' duties in any newspaper — be it the Musket or anyplace else."

In the Conant article of the October issue of the Musket, Burke commented on Conant's transfer, saying that the superintendent felt it was important to retain St. Clair Phillips, another guidance counselor and the only black faculty member at the High School, to show "our commitment to equal opportunity."

Burke also said in the same article that his original recommendation was to transfer Phillips, but that he was influenced by Geiger to keep Phillips at the High School. In addition, Burke referred to Conant's performance as exemplary, calling him a "terrific counselor."

Another reported free speech incident involves English Department Head Deborah Perry. According to both herself and Language Arts Coordinator Joe Walsh, she was restricted from talking at the January 6 budget hearings before the School Committee. Geiger said, that she "was not prevented from talking" at the meeting.

"All coordinators made presentations — Mrs. Perry is a department head. [Walsh] is the one who was supposed to make the presentations," Geiger stated.

He continued, "If Dr. Walsh had wanted her to speak, she could have spoken." However, Perry, who was on the original list of presenters, said she was told twice by Walsh that she "was not to speak" at the budget hearings. Walsh said he was told by the superintendent that Perry would not be allowed to speak about the English budget at the meeting. According to both of their accounts, Walsh informed Perry on December 22 of the superintendent's decision.

In the December 21 issue of the Musket, Perry was critical of some of the superintendent's initial ideas for budget reductions. According to Perry, Walsh told her that those comments "may have had something to do with the superintendent's decision" to restrict her talking. Walsh, however, had no recollection to that aspect of his conversation with Perry.

Geiger said that Perry's comments in the newspaper had no impact on his decision. "People can say whatever they want to say, be it their opinion on the budget...It was no secret that [Perry] is not happy to be going to five periods a day." The budget proposal no longer calls for five classes a day for English teachers.

Walsh said that he believed at the time that he could present Perry's viewpoints adequately at the hearings, and represent her in the best way he could. He refused comment on whether she should have been given the opportunity to talk at the meeting.

Waring, who played a major part in preliminary budget discussions, said, "I think it was unfortunate that Mrs. Perry was not given a chance to talk...It would not have been inappropriate for her to present."

Geiger disagreed, stating, "It would have been inappropriate for her to speak."

Perry said that teachers have told her that "they are afraid to speak out."

Conant noted a concern among the entire faculty about the issue of free speech, but said that he is "sure that many people in the Lexington schools take their constitutional rights seriously."

Miner expressed no apprehension that the upcoming contract negotiations would be affected negatively by the high number of recent grievances.

Proposition 2 1/2 Affects LHS Budget Situation

Continued from page 1

[cause] total disruption of the school system, cutting into programs and staff. An override [of proposition 2 1/2] would be preferable as an alternative to the 2 percent increase."

Committee member John Oberteuffer agreed, "Unless the conditions in the state change drastically between now and the time Town Meeting votes on the budget, there will be no way to avoid an override."

Physics teacher David Spang commented that, "If they go to 2.67 percent, they might as well close down the schools...it cannot be done."

The School Committee voted on January 23 to meet "face to face" with the Selectmen to discuss budget problems.

At that meeting, Committee member Al Zabin said, "We ought no face up to an override...if there is a 2 percent budget it will not be our recommendation [to accept it]. The sooner people are introduced to the concept of an override, the better."

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Life Skills Program Begins

Continued from page 2

graduation requirements for any class already in the high school. The Senate unanimously approved the bill, which was then signed by LHS Principal David Wilson, making it school policy. However, this bill will not affect the Life Skills program.

"Essentially, the administration's effort to put Life Skills into the curriculum was a poorly thought out policy," remarked junior Mike Ouyang. "They didn't consult anyone who should have been consulted [and] went over all our heads to get what they wanted done. This just isn't the way a school should be run."

Junior Adrienne Colby said, "I think that the administration and people wanting to implement the course didn't act with the students' best interests in mind. It might be a valuable course, but I think its implementation was poorly handled."

Yung Kim, another junior, added, "In the beginning I was shocked that they were doing this to us, but I think we have to face the fact that there's nothing we can do about it. They're not going to say, that 'so many people disagree with it that we're not going to do it.'"

Colby continued, "I don't think it's possible to pass any kind of judgment on the course until it has been implemented, but I still fail to understand why it was decided that it must be implemented on the junior class."

Foreign Language teacher Karen Girondel added to the debate by saying, "I wish that students had been given a choice. They made course selections based on a different set of requirements."

"[Life Skills] is a good idea and a good program," said junior Sean Gnecco, "but I don't think it should be forced upon us. I think we should [have been] forewarned if it is going to be a graduation requirement."

Judy Cohen, one of the three high school Life Skills instructors said she believed that the reason Life Skills was successfully implemented after several years of trying to develop such a program was a result of "greater community involvement as well as grant funding."

Life Skills teacher Gila Saks added, "We were waiting for the grant money and didn't hear [about it] until the end of the summer. We were hoping to know earlier."

The teachers explained that the grant funding had to be used for this school year, but Life Skills teacher Maureen Rowe said, "We all would have been happy to have had advance notice."

The November 14 and 21 School Committee meetings were attended by both advocates and opponents of the Life Skills program. Among those speaking against the course were a group of Lexington High School juniors, who argued against the method of scheduling the Life Skills course. Juniors Jessica Bloom and Ruthie Krieger presented a petition signed by eighty-four students who opposed the program. They made a proposal regarding the lowering of the graduation requirement in physical education to accommodate the course, since the LHS gym requirement exceeds that of the state. School Committee member John Oberteuffer thanked the students for presenting an alternative proposal instead of only arguments, but these suggestions were rejected after comments by Wilson and high school gym teachers.

At the November 21 meeting, School Committee member Judy Leader defended the course, stating, "I don't want another class to go through [the high school] without having this kind of experience."

Senior Margaret Nokes disagreed with the importance of the course, stating, "I don't think it [would have taught] me anything." She added that she had had several scheduling difficulties last year and would not have been able to fit another course into her junior year schedule. She continued, "Life Skills puts [students] in a bad position for scheduling purposes. It's ridiculous--you can't fit it all in."

Trelawney Goodell, a junior, agreed with Nokes, saying, "This course is entirely uprooting my schedule plans for my last two years in high school." Goodell said she was primarily angered about the fact that students were not even given a choice of which semester of junior year to take the course. She added, "It would have been much easier for me to take Life Skills during the first semester, because I need my free blocks in the spring, when I play a sport. However, next year, during the first semester, I wouldn't be able to fit it in because of the extra time needed to fill out college applications."

School Committee member Lois Coit said that the concerns students voiced about scheduling conflicts indicated that they frequently experienced stressful situations. She said she felt that the Life Skills course would help them deal with this type of stress.

Another junior, Antonia Ferrier, said, "I personally think that Life Skills is an impairment to the junior class. If the course had been required of me as a freshman, it would have made a much bigger impression on me. The course may be a good idea, but I think it's being offered at the wrong time."

On the same note, junior Charlotte Woodbridge expressed her opinion that "the administration's illusions of an effective course are illusions indeed." Woodbridge's full schedule forced her to drop an elective course in order to take Life Skills. Other juniors with full schedules who are unable to drop a course must either take Life Skills as seniors with next year's junior class or take the course during gym and then complete the physical education requirement during the second half of next year.

Saks said that students opposition to the course "makes it frustrating [for us] since we as teachers understand the frustration and are more or less in the middle. It clearly impacts on the way the course goes and makes it harder to make that important connection with each class as a group. These [types of courses] go on and are welcomed in other areas of the nation."

Cohen added, "The timing has delayed that kind of embracing of it." She continued, "I think the resistance from some students will mean that it will take longer for them to participate, if they participate at all. That's unfortunate [but] not everyone is feeling negative....It's too bad the timing is the way it is."

Rowe agreed, but added, "We can't dwell on it for the rest of the semester. It's not in our power to change any of it, though we can make suggestions to improve [the Life Skills course for future classes]. Hopefully we [as teachers] are flexible enough to learn from this as well]."

Saks continued, "we share in the frustration [of students] and would like to move past it and utilize all the talent and creativity of the current junior class. We hope [students] can move past [frustration] and make it a learning experience."

When asked what she thought about the course content, Nokes said, "I think they should reassess the importance of [Life Skills] and find out what people already know."

At the November 21 School Committee meeting, Wilson said that he felt the most important aspect of the Life Skills course is that it "allows students to understand how one makes decisions and allows students to view information with peers for discussion."

Sean Gnecco and Carol Martinez are both Juniors who are enrolled in the mandated Life Skills course.

Photo by Lara Ho

Budget Gets Cut

Continued from page 1

ly on tenure and seniority, as stated in the teachers' union contract, according to Geiger. Untenured teachers and then those with the least seniority would be cut throughout the system to make up the 22 plus proposed faculty cuts. Transfers that follow the cuts will be based on five criteria: seniority, length of time in Lexington, quality of performance, experience, and suitablity for transfer. According to Geiger, in making decisions as to who will be transferred, the most important aspect will be quality of performance.

School Committee member John Obertuffer said, "I have reservations about the budget...I am concerned about increased teaching load and cuts in staff. It is hard to say what the effect on education will be...Teachers will not only be teaching more but they will have more students [and] I am concerned about that specifically."

Math teacher Arthur Dulong said, "It's not the teachers you're hurting — it's the students' education and the community. They can make me teach eight classes with forty students each, and I'll do what I can with it. But the town will be hurt."

When asked if he thought cutting teachers would hurt the quality of programs, Geiger said, "No."

Science teacher Margaret Schwartz, however, disagreed, "I don't see how it is possible to deliver the same quality of education with fewer people doing it. If we follow the recommendation of the science department head, the Level II will have five classes per week, the [Level] III will have four. Now, I don't see how one can accomplish as much in one-third less time. Also there is the extra number of kids that must be dealt with per teacher. Perhaps what Dr. Geiger means is that everyone continue to do his or her best."

Concern has been voiced as to the possibility that several science teachers with particular expertise in the same area would be cut, leaving a void in that specific area. Geiger said that teachers must be "certified in the academic area" in which they teach. He explained, "You can't have a chemistry teacher teach physics...and if you're a physics teacher who didn't have a certificate to teach chemistry, then you couldn't teach chemistry."

The nursing program is another area of proposed budget cuts. Currently, there are three full-time nurses, two eighty percent nurses, and one half-time nurse that cover all eight schools. Geiger's proposal includes hiring nurses from outside agencies, thereby lowering the costs of fringe benefits, and hiring aides who have a minimum of 30 hours of first aid instruction. Geiger explained, "We've eliminated one nurse position and added 2.5 aides...Aides can do everything nurses can do except give medication."

L.H.S. nurse Gilda Kunz disagreed, "We have specialized nursing education geared towards school work...There will be no continuity of health care [if nurses are hired from outside]. They won't know the parents or students...We feel a closeness to the school, the kids, and the parents. Our program here is one of the best in the country [and] we are a model for other schools. It would be a shame if [the program] were cut."

Lexington Student Removed From System

by Emily Dennison and Stefan Schick

Rupesh and Brijesh Naidu, both former Lexington High School sudents, were forced to leave the high school or pay tuition this fall when it was determined that they were not legally residents of Lexington. The brothers apparently lived with their aunt and uncle in Lexington in order to attend Lexington schools while their parents lived in Cambridge, according to testimony at a November 21 School Committee meeting.

The Naidus would have to pay $6,000 tuition per child per year if they chose to continue to send their children to Lexington schools, the School Committee decided. They decided instead to send Rupesh and Brijesh to the Cambridge Ringe and Latin School.

School officials learned that the boys were not living with their parents after they noticed that Rupesh's first quarter report card was mailed to a Cambridge address.

"The rule is the town in which you are a resident has an obligation to educate you," explained School Committee Member Lois Coit. Rupesh and Brijesh's parents said at the meeting that the boys' aunt and uncle were acting as their guardians because their Cambridge apartment was not big enough for the entire family. Dr. and Mrs. Naidu of Lexington could not be reached for comment. Rupesh Naidu declined to comment.

"Under the law a child is considered domiciled with his or her parents unless a legal guardianship is established [with someone else]," School Committee Member Al Zabin said at the meeting. He added that the boys' aunt and uncle did not appear to be their legal guardians.

Coit said that the aunt and uncle "were not [Rupesh and Brijesh's] legal guardians. There was nothing we saw in writing that would make them [their] guardians," she said.

Rupesh Naidu is currently a senior in high school and his brother Brijesh is a freshman. Although the general sentiment of the committee was sympathetic toward the boys, the vote not to allow them to finish the year if their parents did not pay the tuition was unanimous.

Senior year is a particularly difficult time to change schools, Coit explained. "We certainly didn't want to make life hard for a seventeen-year-old."

"With the desperate budget situation, we can't afford it," Coit said, referring to the possibility that the Naidus attend Lexington High School without paying tuition. "We face a very hard financial situation.... It is unfortunate when tight financial situations force us to do things to separate individuals."

Superintendent of Schools Philip E. Geiger added that allowing the Naidus to stay would have set an undesirable precedent.

Coit estimated that it costs about $6,000 per year to educate a student in Lexington. People from other communities may apply to have their children attend Lexington schools for $6,000 per year. Currently, seven students who do not live in Lexington pay tuition to attend Lexington schools, generating $42,000 in revenues.

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Hockey Coach Earns 200th Win

by Justin Frazer

The LHS hockey team recently defeated Stoneham in a 7-4 comeback victory, giving Coach Richard Burns his 200th Middlesex League win. The icemen currently post a respectable record of 5-6-1 even with the loss of co-captain Tim Spelman due to a broken ankle. Burns modestly admitted, "All I can do is open and close the gates."

In the victory against Stoneham, last year's Middlesex League Champions, assistant captain goalie Brian Stone played a super game and seldom gave Stoneham chances to put the puck in the net, just as he did in the first game of the season when the Minutemen shut out Stoneham 4-0.

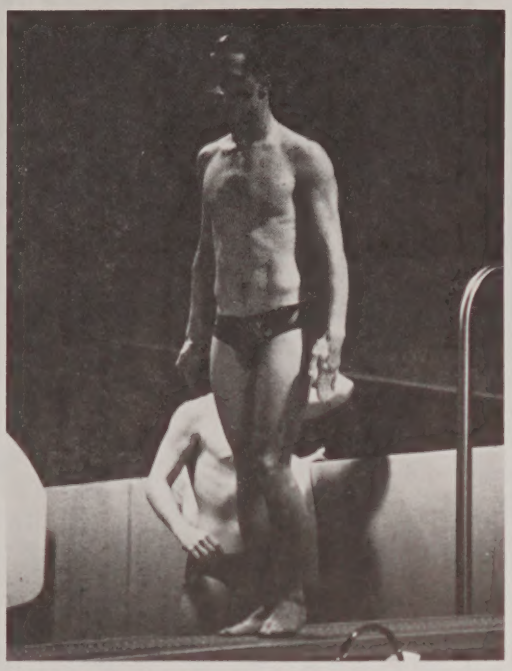
Also contributing to the victory was the high powered scoring line, mentioned in the Boston Globe, of Billy Graham, the league's second leading scorer, Rob Costello and assistant captain Brian Kirk. The defensive line of assistant captain Erik Bergmeyer, Mark Lavalle, and Joel Flagg also contributed to the win by tagging on Stoneham's power forward Derek Edgerly who was given no chances to score.

Lexington's veteran defensemen also played excellent games by stopping all breakaways and setting up perfect breakouts. The defense consists of co-captain Ted Sidel, Peter Mahoney, Shawn Wilt, Justin Frazer, Jon Huerta, and Chris Ray.

Great games were also played by the line of Chris Barry, Chris Sullivan, and Jeff Martin, who scored the first goal of the game, his first of the season. Veteran Mark Sisterson also participated to help the team to victory. Not playing that night was goalie Brian Zabin.

Senior Pete Mahoney skates across the ice.

Musket File Photo



Senior Rich Beukema prepares for a dive.

Musket File Photo

Boys' Runners Sprint to Success

by Yeh-Jiun Tung

The LHS boys' indoor track team is regaining momentum after losing two early season meets to Winchester and Reading. In the most recent meet against Melrose, the tracksters came out on top, 58-27. With that victory, the Minutemen stand with a record of 4-2.

The meeting with the Melrose Red Raiders proved to be a successful one as numerous first places were captured in many events. In the 45-yard hurdles, senior co-captain Joey Wong sped to an apparent victory but was disqualified for hitting a hurdle with his hand. The first place was given to sophomore Bing Chou, a valuable asset to Lexington's hurdling crew.

The 45-yard dash gave Lexington first and second place finishes by juniors Chris Williams and Ken Richards, who both raced to an identical time of 5.2. In the 600, another 1-2 was taken by senior Nick Nebolsine and freshman phenom Eric Losick, a promising trackster for future years.

Junior Matt McCormack and senior Jon Speare grabbed first and second places respectively in the 300. McCormack's unrelenting kick on the last lap gave him a personal best time of 34.7.

The 1000 was an easy victory for the Minutemen as junior Ed Single cruised to a first place finish with sophomore Dirk Schoellner ten seconds behind taking third. The mile also gave Lexington more points as juniors Yeh-Jiun Tung and Greg D'Agostino took first and third respectively.

In a tough two-mile, freshman standout Josh McCarthy hung on to two experienced Melrose runners to grab a third place. In the high jump, Williams took an easy first with a jump of 6'0". Williams currently holds this year's Middlesex League best jump of 6'3".

The relay team of Darryl Shanks, Ed Single, Joey Wong, and Nick Nebolsine easily outdistanced the Melrose team and finished with a time of 3:48.

Veteran speedsters co-captain John Raach and Ted Fitzpatrick took the day off after running impressive performances at Harvard's State Coaches Meet. Raach, entered in the mile, raced to a fourth place among the state's best runners with a time of 4:27.1.

Fitzpatrick was victorious in the two-mile, matched up against Globe All-Scholastic Craig Sarney. Holding off Sarney's bursts, Fitzpatrick won in 9:42.

Coach Arthur Reed said, "The Melrose meet was a good indication of our abilities. But I'm concerned about Woburn. It's going to be a tough meet but I think we can beat them."

Swimmers Splash to Strong Victory

by Yeh-Jiun Tung

The LHS Boys Swim Team, after losing its opening league dual meet against a powerful Belmont team, now holds a respectable record of 2-1. The Minutemen are currently placed fourth out of six teams. The most recent meet against Reading was a impressive victory, 90-67.

The Reading Rockets met the Minutemen at their home pool at Minuteman Technical School. The meet started off on the right foot for the Minutemen as both Lexington 200-yard medley relay teams swam to first and second places. The winning team consisted of sophomore Robbie Egan, senior Pablo Martinez, sophomore Dave Murman, and senior captain Rich Beukema. Second place was taken by sophomore Jason Simon, juniors Ethan Ehrenberg, Mike Zeylikman, and Nigel Glover.

The 200-yard freestyle was not a strong event for Lexington but sophomore Matt Cole was able to take a second with back-up by Simon and Ehrenberg who captured fourth and fifth places respectively.

The Minuteman trio of Martinez, senior captain Matt Davis and junior Conan Hom grabbed nine points in the 200-yard individual medley with second, third and fourth places.

Beukema had a first place finish in the 50-yard freestyle followed by third and fourth place finishes by Glover and Zeylikman. The diving event was taken by junior Mike Kennedy who scored 134.6 points to add six points to Lexington's score.

The 100-yard butterfly gave the Minutemen nine more points as Martinez, Hom and Mael swam to second, third and fourth places.

The 100-yard freestyle proved to be an exciting event as Murman fought Reading's Chris Grabesek for the entire race. Unfortunately, Murman had to settle for second, losing only by a tenth of a second in a time of 54.29. Egan and Kennedy rounded the Lexington points with third and fifth places respectively.

The distance event, the 500-yard freestyle, brought some first place points to Lexington's scoreboard as Cole swam to victory in 5:47, outdistancing his Reading opponents by more than 40 seconds. Glover took third and senior Eric Eisenberg took fifth.

Egan was victorious in the 100-yard backstroke followed by a supporting fourth place by Simon. An apparent sweep of the 100-yard backstroke by Murman, Davis and Ehrenberg was nullified as Ehrenberg unfortunately was disqualified.

A sound defeat of Reading leads the swimmers to a tough meet against Winchester, who has posted a victory against the strong Belmont team, whom they beat, Winchester's first loss of the season.

Shelli Adamian dribbles down the court.

Musket File Photo

Bill McKibben

Author of The End of Nature

will be appearing at Lexington High School on April 24th 1990 in conjunction with Earth Day in the Science Lecture Hall.

11:00-12:00- Lecture

12:30- 1:30- Panel on Global Warming

Girls' Hoopsters Competitive Despite Close Losses

by Kristen Alves

Despite its 3-9 record, the Lexington girls' basketball team has been a force in the Middlesex League. To date, the season has been sparked by some thrilling games.

Leading the team are senior returning varsity players Shelli Adamian and Marry Barry. Adamian has averaged twelve points, six rebounds, and four assists per game. Due to a broken thumb, Barry was only able to play in three games. The imminent return of this key player is a glimmer of optimism that carries the team.

Junior Cindy Harrington has been starting at center. Despite being plagued by foul trouble, Harrington has been one of the driving forces of the team. With Barry sidelined, numerous underclassmen have been seeing increased playing time. Anne Quinn, Tammy Hadley, and Cathy Urban have been trying their luck at the vacant forward position. Janet Ascolese and Carol D'Antuono complete the starting line-up. Forceful drives towards the basket and aggressive rebounds have made Ascolese the most fouled member of the team.

Guard Kristen Alves has been the distributor of the ball for the offensive line. With strong defense and a quick transitional game, Debbie Saunders and Meredith Fantasia round out the roster.

During a recent game versus archrival Burlington, Coach Sandy Curt called up freshmen Kelley Harrington, Karen Tracey, and Michelle Concesion. In the first half, it did not appear that Lexington would break into double digit scoring, but the team sparked in the second half. Alves led the way with nine points. Hadley, Tracey, and K. Harrington also contributed to the second half scoring frenzy.

Billy Brincklow takes a shot against Melrose.

Musket File Photo

Hoopsters Hit the Skids

Face First Loosing Season in Years

by Eoin Cannon and Arzhang Kamarei

How do you explain a 4-9 basketball team averaging more points per game than its opponents? If this same group has lost six games by three points or less and has an average margin of victory over twelve points, it is clear that this is no ordinary 4-9 team.

The 1989-90 LHS boys basketball team has talent. The players have hustle. The coaching staff is made up of proven winners, and the seniors know what it takes to win games, since most of them were with the EMass North finalist team of 1987 and the 17-3 team of last year. So why isn't the team winning?

One reason for the losses is plain bad luck. In the past, Lexington has had more than its fair share of lucky breaks and close victories. Maybe fate has caught up to the Minutemen, and things are evening out. Also, when you are the Middlesex League Champions five years in a row and compile a six year league mark of 99-13, teams are out to beat you.

Head coach Bob Farias states,"Basically, my feeling on the season is this: Even when we've won a lot of games, we would pride ourselves on how we played versus the opponent rather than whether we won the game. A lot of times we won by 40 but weren't happy with our performance... This year our goal is still the same. I think we're operating as well as the other team, but unfortunately we're not winning."

Poor foul shooting may also be a culprit. Although the Minutemen have improved in this area as of late, it may have cost them games early in the season.

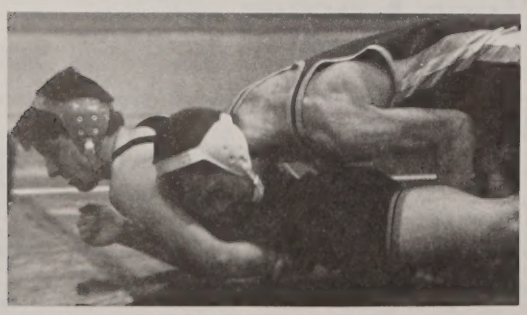
But enough about the losses. There are many positive sides to this season. For starters, the seniors have proven that they can play tough and set an example for the underclassmen. The gritty inside play of Mike Allen and Billy Brincklow, both of whom suffered through shooting slumps early on, has been a major part of the team's offensive threat, especially late in the game. Big men Jeff Kvaal and Jon Berg have consistently matched up with the league's best centers and shown that they can play. Matt Sahagian and Jon Paone have come off the bench to help in key situations.

The talent-laden group of juniors, led by Brad Martin and Louis Bullard, have given a glimpse of what could be a great team next year. Martin and Bullard are among the league's leading scorers, while Matt Allen has shown he can shoot and rebound effectively. More recently, Brian Driscoll has earned himself a spot on the varsity roster with tough play and some inside moves. 6'2" sophomore Craig Murray has played consistently in the paint, taking on his first varsity experience with enthusiasm.

Then there is Rashad Wilson. Probably the best freshman in the state, he immediately earned himself a place on the varsity with a good head for the game and a devastating outside shot. The point guard of the future for LHS, Wilson can also bang the boards, displaying a lot of strength in his 5'8" frame.

Although Lexington has no chance of reaching the state tournament this year, there are still seven games remaining in the season for this team to prove itself as a winner. Farias says, "Is the effort there, the desire? That's all we look for to be a Lexington High player, and that has been totally accomplished by the kids."

And make no mistake, regardless of win-loss record, this is no losing team.



Senior Mike Hill pins his Woburn opponent

Photo by Kelly Burke

Girls' Track Remains Undefeated

By Amy Marx

With a perfect record of 6-0, the undefeated LHS girls' indoor track team has earned sole possession of first place in the Middlesex League. Of late, the team has been completely unstoppable. Against Watertown, the score was 66-18; against Stoneham, the score was 58-28; against Melrose, the score was 69-12; and against Belmont, the score was 59-29.

For years, Lexington girls' track has been setting the pace in the Middlesex League. In the past four years, Lexington has won four consecutive league championship titles. With only two meets left in the 1989-1990 season, this year's team is on track to win yet another league championship. According to track coach Arthur Dulong, "Every year Lexington athletes have a way of producing extraordinary efforts when the pressure is on." This year is certainly no exception.

The team's success is in part due to a core of experienced and talented athletes who were part of last year's state championship team.The team has been led by a small, but determined, group of seniors. Co-captain Jay Hartshorn has been leading the distance runners. Within, the league, Hartshorn has been undefeated in the 1000, the mile, and the two-mile. Co-captain Amy Marx has been faring equally well. Undefeated in the league, she currently posts the league's best time in the 45 yd. hurdles.

Senior Nadine Cummings continues to excel at the shot put. She and sophomore Michelle Pavidas continue to take the top two places in practically every meet.

Seniors Hanne Bernhoss and Jenny Lindwall provide the essential depth in the distance events. Competing mainly in the 600 and the 1000, both runners are good for points in almost every meet.

The majority of the distance crew is made up of a solid nucleus of juniors. As they continue to win their event, both Angela and Concetta Marino improve their mile and 1000 times, respectively. Agnieszka Reiss has been Lexington's hard-core distance runner. The junior has been Lexington's most dependable competitor in the two mile race.

Sophomore Maria Berger and freshman Becky Dennison have been asserting their talent in the distance events. Currenty, Dennison holds the league's fastest time in the 1000.

One of the team's greatest assets is the sprinting duo of Sarah Hutchinson and Latisha McQueen. Both runners are amongst the finest sprinters in the league. To date, Hutchinson holds the league best in the 300. Freshman Lora Marzilli is sprinting through a stellar first season. In the dash, the freshman has produced numerous victories in clutch situations.

Junior Shana Yansen demonstrates her high-jump skills.

Musket File Photo

Wrestlers Set School Record For Wins

by Kevin Joseph

In addition to establishing a winning record, Lexington High School's wrestling team has broken the school record for the most wins in one season. According to Coach George Nichols, "the kids have come a long way and deserve much credit." As a result of extra effort, Lexington wrestling has really turned around. The improvement is phenomenal when compared to last year's record of 1-16-1. The effort began in mid-October when new wrestlers attended intramural wrestling held by varsity veterans.

Lexington surprised many people as the team defeated Catholic Memorial by thirty six points, and came within ten points of B.C. High. Lexington dominated the lower weight categories against B.C. High, but forfeits in the 171 and 189 pound weight classes gave the win to B.C. High.

Coach Nichols remarked, "The boys' determination and effort were definitely commendable."

Sereyvuth Tan remained undefeated as he pinned his opponent. Despite his being the underdog, Kevin Joseph pinned his adversary in less than a minute. Dan Kulin's 11-3 win and Mike Hill's pin brought the score to 21-12. Bobby Joseph and Peter Abraham both won by a margin of nine points. A loss at the 160 pounds, the 171 and 189 pound forfeits, and the heavyweight loss left the final score at 40-30, B.C. High.

"Although the score book says that Lexington lost, in my mind, we won. It was the forfeits that really lost the match," commented Coach Nichols.

Lexington beat Catholic Memorial 54-18. Mark Gallagher started the team off with six points by pinning his opposition. In addition to winning the match, Tan set a personal record by pinning his adversary in twelve seconds. Kevin Joseph defeated his opponent 14-1. Dan Kulin won by a pin, and Glenn Ready added to the score by winning 8-4. Dan Hill wrestled tough against a strong opponent in the 140 pound weight class.

Three wrestlers helped the team by wrestling at a higher weight class. Abraham dominated his match at the 152 pound weight class and won 11-2. Bobby Joseph aggressively pinned his opponent in a mere 47 seconds. Gerard Marino, weighing 155 pounds, wrestled incredibly against the 171 pound CM Tournament champion. With ten seconds left in the match, Marino pinned his opponent for the victory. The total score was 54-18.